

# NAACP OHIO STATE CONFERENCE ADOPTS YOUNGSTOWN BRANCH ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE JUSTICE RESOLUTION

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McGuffey Wildlife Preserve was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1966 by the U .S. Department of the Interior (DOI), National Park Service (NPS)"

*William Holmes McGuffey  
Historical Society*

Conference of NAACP Branches has adopted the Environmental and Climate Justice Resolution of the Youngstown Mahoning County Branch of the NAACP in support of the restoration, maintenance, and preservation of the William Holmes [McGuffey Wildlife Preserve](#), McGuffey Family Pond and Dock within the Mill Creek Metroparks. The McGuffey Wildlife Preserve, contains seventy-three acres and was declared a National Historic Landmark in 1966 by the U .S. Department of the Interior (DOI), National Park Service (NPS), a designation that carries with it the rare recognition of exceptional value in

commemoration or illustration of the history of the United States. The site includes the family well and pond, trail, and a drumlin, which is an unusual geological feature, which was used as both a Native American and pioneer lookout.

William Holmes McGuffey (1800-1873) was raised in Coitsville Township adjacent to Youngstown's Eastside Community. The family homestead was donated to Mill Creek Metroparks in 1998, by the William Holmes McGuffey Historical Society (WHMHS).

William Holmes McGuffey, a renowned educator, an internationally known reading expert, formerly a university president and author of the universally relied upon Eclectic Readers, a favorite son of Ohio, known as "America's Storyteller" and "America's Schoolmaster," whose family legacy includes teaching Black people to read during a period in U.S. history when it was illegal to do so. Mr. McGuffey wrote the famous Eclectic Readers, first published in 1836 and still in print. Generations of Americans were taught to read, using these books. Abraham Lincoln called Mr. McGuffey "America's Storyteller" and "America's Schoolmaster." Henry Ford called the readers his alma mater. Citizenship, character, conservation, values and literacy were all recurrent themes. Mr. McGuffey was also a university professor and president, in addition to

being an ordained Presbyterian minister.

Youngstown's East Side, Campbell and Coitsville Township, a local community that consists of low- and moderate-income families, many of whom are Black and Brown people, differently abled, seniors and several public schools. This north east section of Youngstown's metropolitan district is deprived of access, education, a nature alternative for youth that are overexposed to technology, recreation for abled and differently abled individuals, seniors, residents with few if any transportation sources, and the pond serves as a watering source for wildlife, which families could view from the dock when the pond functions and can be programmed for use as a reflection space, for education purposes, including reading activities.

The restoration of The McGuffey Wildlife Preserve is supported by at least 17 organizations and leaders, including the following: a U.S. Senator, a U.S. Congressman, an Ohio State Senator, three Ohio State Representatives, Mahoning County Commissioners, 14 nonprofits and foundations. They are all in agreement that restoration, maintenance, and preservation of the pond and dock will ensure the historical integrity of the facility, which encompasses seventy-three acres of woods, and trails, that also can be used for recreation, hiking and biking, bird-watching, a historical marker, the McGuffey Family Well, and other unique geological features.

For further details please contact Richard S. Scarsella, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the William Holmes McGuffey Historical Society at (330) 774-0188 or James Brown NAACP Youngstown Mahoning County President at (330) 782-9777.

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